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L O N D O N:

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A. M. A. B. E. L. A.

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T O

MRS. MONTAGU,

THIS LITTLE POEM

(WROTE AT HER SUGGESTION,

IN THE FORM OF AN ELEGIAC DIALOGUE)

WITH THE GREATEST ESTEEM FOR HER

JUDGMENT,

IS INSCRIBED BY

HER RESPECTFUL HUMBLE SERVANT,

EDWARD JERNINGHAM.

TO

Mrs. MONTAGUE

THIS LITTLE POEM

WRITTEN AT HER SUGGESTION

IN THE FORM OF AN ALLEGORICAL DIALOGUE

WITH THE GREATEST ESTEEM FOR HER

JUDGMENT

IS INSCRIBED BY

HER RESPECTFUL HUMBLE SERVANT

EDWARD ELKINGTON

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE subject of this poem is founded on a circumstance that happened during the late war.—
A young lady, not meeting with the concurrence of her relations in favour of an officer for whom she expressed her regard, was prevailed upon, by his solicitations, to consent to a clandestine marriage; which took place on the day he set out to join his regiment abroad, where he was unfortunately killed in an engagement.

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A M A B E L L A.

HARMODIUS breath'd the rural air, nor found
His ruddy health with length of years decrease:
By duty prompted, AMABELLA crown'd,
His silver forehead with the wreath of peace:

By partial nature fram'd in beauty's mould,
Adorn'd with ev'ry grace, unspoil'd by art,
To friendship's circle still did she unfold,
The lovelier beauties of a feeling heart.

ENDEAR'D

ENDEAR'D to all she met, each welcome day,
 By fortune's hand, with various blessings fraught :
 When, lo ! her gayety's accustom'd ray
 Was quench'd, untimely, with the gloom of thought.

WHAT fix'd the bosom-thorn, affliction knows,
 Where peace sat brooding as the gentle dove :
 What blasted on her cheek the summer rose,
 Or slow disease, or unsuccessful love,

REMAIN'D unknown.—'Twas by the many guess'd,
 That love to her soft vows had prov'd unkind :
 Beyond the pow'r of her weak frame oppress'd,
 Insanity o'erthrew her lovely mind.

AT

At length recov'ring, yet to grief devote,
To solitude she gave th' unsocial day;
Like a pale vot'ry from the world remote,
Uncheer'd, unvisited of pleasure's ray.

OFT did HARMODIUS (at her state dismay'd)
Solicit from his child her secret pain:
Her vague reply still from his question stray'd,
And each repeated effort prov'd in vain.

To speed the moments of the loit'ring hour,
And by their plaintive strains perchance allur'd,
Within a spacious myrtle-woven bow'r,
Two turtle doves the pensive fair secur'd.

“ YE

" YE little captives, wou'd she often say,
 " Tho' here secluded from the fields of air,
 " Thro' yonder vernal grove forbid to stray,
 " And join the kindred train that wanton there;

" 'GAINST you the gunner never lifts his arm,
 " Nor o'er this mansion does the falcon fail;
 " You live unconscious of the storm's alarm,
 " The rain impetuous, and the beating hail.

" NOR here, by kind compassion unimpress'd,
 " The school-boy ever rears his impious hand,
 " To fill with agony the feather'd breast,
 " And raze the little domes that love had plan'd."

THEIR

THEIR harmless joys disease too soon effac'd:
 One fatal morn, her Turturella's mate
 She found, with flagging wing subdued, oppress'd,
 And just, just sinking at the blow of fate:

WHILE down her cheek compassion's show'r distill'd,
 She gently rais'd it to her anxious breast;
 But death's cold blast life's crimson current chill'd,
 And thus the fair her breathless bird address'd:

“ ILL-FATED turtle, round whose peaceful bow'r,
 “ The jocund loves so lately wont to play:
 “ How sunk, alas! in youth's exulting hour,
 “ To fell disease, to death th' untimely prey:

“ How

“ How silent is the voice, which, void of art,
 “ Along the tender day was heard to coo !
 “ How still, how frozen is the constant heart,
 “ Which to its dear companion beat so true !

“ THAT dear companion, that now widow'd dove,
 “ To screen from every harm, be mine the care ;
 “ And, while she mourns her ne'er reviving love,
 “ Her grief to me the mourner will endear :

“ LIKE thee, a widow too, condemn'd to mourn :
 “ No more to me does life unfold its charms,
 “ Death, death forbids him ever to return !”
 She said — and sunk into th' attendant's arms.

HER

HER swift relapsing to her former state,
 With boding fears, approach'd the serving train :
 This scene's dread period tremblingly they wait,
 Nor were their boding fears indulg'd in vain :

AWAKNING from her trance, around she threw,
 Distressful fair, her much disorder'd eyes ;
 And wild'ring said — “ repeat that kind adieu :
 “ Ah no ! from love to war, to death he flies.

“ DID ye not hear the clash of hostile spears ?
 “ Ah ! mark ye not that breast-plate stain'd with gore ?
 “ What groan was that which pierc'd these fearful ears ?
 “ He falls, he falls — my warrior is no more :

“ NOR was, Oh heav’n! his AMABELLA near,
 “ To sooth his Pain and echo sigh to sigh,
 “ Drop on the gaping wound a balmy tear,
 “ Kiss his cold lip, and close his fading eye.”

OF her distress th’ alarm’d HARMODIUS taught,
 With trembling steps approach’d th’ unconscious fair :
 “ Give me, he cried, with grief paternal fraught,
 “ Give me, Oh AMABEL’! to sooth thy care :

“ SAY what affliction has thy soul impress’d ?
 “ Reveal what storm thy bosom’d calmness breaks ?
 “ Reveal — and thus relieve this anguish’d breast :
 “ The tender father to his daughter speaks.

AMA-

AMABELLA.

- “ AH what avails the praise the brave obtain !
 “ Thro’ his white bosom rush’d the hostile steel :
 “ ’Twas his to swell the number of the slain,
 “ And mine affliction’s keenest point to feel.”

HARMODIUS.

- “ HER roving thought no trace of reason bears :
 “ To her rack’d mind, Oh heav’n ! thy peace impart :
 “ A loving parent bathes thy cheek with tears ;
 “ HARMODIUS holds thee to his breaking heart.”

AMABELLA.

- “ To thee, I grateful kneel, Oh generous seer !
 “ Who dost, to one unknown, thy care extend :
 “ Along thy path may Peace her olives rear,
 “ And heav’n, in battle, shield thy dearest friend :

“ FOR

“ FOR me, who droop beneath misfortune’s show’r,
 “ I had a father,—now, alas ! a foe,—
 “ Thou’lt blush to hear,—in forrow’s darkest hour,
 “ He leaves his child, abandon’d to her woe: ”

“ BUT to thy heart, that’s fram’d of softer mould,
 “ What can, to thee, a wretch like me endear !
 “ The spring, the motive of thy love unfold :
 “ Say, fay, for me why flows that friendly tear ! ”

“ YET soft awhile,—methinks that hoary brow—
 “ That plaintive voice—Ah bear with my distress !—
 “ Or much remembrance is effac’d, or now,
 “ A tender father’s tear-dew’d cheek I press.”

HAR-

HARMODIUS.

“ ON knees of gratitude, I bless the skies,
“ That AMABELLA to herself restore.”

AMABELLA.

“ Ah wherefore dost thou joy ! thy daughter dies :

“ Support me to yon couch—I can no more—”

“ I FEEL, I feel, the pulse of life retire !

“ Ah deign to hear thy dying child reveal,

“ What, in rebellion to thy just desire,

“ Lock'd in her breast, she dar'd so long conceal :

“ By thee, unsanction'd, did I plight my love,

“ And, all to thee unknown, a bride became.”

HAR-

HARMODIUS.

“ **HARMODIUS** will to both a father prove.”

AMABELLA.

“ To him thy pardon thou canst ne’er proclaim :

“ **THREE** fleeting hours had scarcely call’d me bride,

“ When he was summon’d to the martial plain :

“ And there,—forgive these tears,—in beauty’s pride,

“ The much lamented valiant youth was slain.

“ **WHAT** tho’ unworthy of thy care I prove,

“ To thy remembrance let thy child be dear ;

“ Thy kind compassion let the daughter move,

“ When this weak frame shall press th’ untimely bier.”

MORE

MORE wou'd she say,—her voice began to fail,
From her faint eye life's ling'ring spark retir'd,
The rip'ning cherry on her lip grew pale,
She heav'd a sigh, and in that sigh expir'd.

F I N I S.

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From her faint eye life's lingering spark retired,
The rippling cherry of her lip grew pale,
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F I N I S